

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-09

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-02 INR-07 L-02

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 OMB-01

AID-05 IO-10 EB-07 /077 W

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R 121532Z APR 75

FM AMEMBASSY CAIRO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3313

INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN

AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI

C O N F I D E N T I A L CAIRO 3715

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT EG

SUBJECT: CABINET CHANGES EXPECTED SOON

SUMMARY: MINOR CABINET CHANGES ARE EXPECTED WITHIN NEXT WEEK. FAHMY, GAHASY, AND SALIM WILL MORE THAN LIKELY MAINTAIN THEIR PORTFOLIOS; HEGAZY WILL PROBABLY RETAIN PRIME MINISTER JOB FOR TIME BEING. CHANGES IN TECHNICAL MINISTRIES WILL BE WELCOMED BY CRITICS OF GOE'S ECONOMIC POLICY. END SUMMARY.

1. "MAJOR CABINET RESHUFFLE THIS WEEK" BANNERS AHRAH APRIL 12. GUMHURIYYA ON PREVIOUS DAY HEADLINED: "RESHUFFLE AFTER INTERNAL ACTION PLAN COMPLETED". (ACTION PLAN IS DUE NEXT WEEK.) ALTHOUGH RUMORS OF A CABINET CHANGE HAVE BEEN RIFE IN CAIRO FOR SOME WEEKS, WE HAVE REASON TO BELIEVE THAT SOME CHANGES WILL IN FACT BE ANNOUNCED SHORTLY.

2. CHANGES WILL PROBABLY INVOLVE TECHNICAL AND ECONOMIC MINISTRIES. RECENT EDITORIALS HAVE CORRECTLY POINTED OUT THAT INCOMPETENCY OF TECHNICAL MINISTERS HAS FORCED PRIMIN HEGAZY TO DO WORK OF TEN MEN, AND HAVE URGED HIM TO RECRUIT SUCH COMPETENT FIGURES AS ABD AL-JALIL -AMARI. ALI AMIN'S
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WEEKLY COMMENTARY APRIL 12 FEATURES PHOTO OF SHARIF LUTFI,

CLAIMING HIS NAME IS "EXPECTED TO SHINE FORTH BRIGHTLY ONCE AGAIN". WE DO NOT BELIEVE, HOWEVER, SHARIF AND HEGAZY WOULD WILLINGLY AGREE TO SERVE IN SAME CABINET.

3. PEOPLE'S ASSEMBLY HAS FOR SOME TIME BEEN INSISTING THAT NO INDIVIDUAL SHOULD HOLD MORE THAN ONE SENIOR POST. CABINET HAS REPORTEDLY APPROVED THIS NOTION. THOSE AFFECTED ARE MIN JUSTICE ABU ZAYD (ALSO ARAB SOCIALIST PROSECUTOR), MIN CULTURE SIBA'I (ALSO SYG OF AAPSO), MIN MANPOWER GHARIB (ALSO LABOR FEDERATION LEADER), AND MIN TRANSPORT AND COMMUNICATIONS RIYAD (ALSO SYG OF ARAB TELECOMMUNICATIONS FEDERATION). MIN ELECTRIC POWER SULTAN AND MIN SOCIAL INSURANCE IBRAHIM, BOTH ILL, MAY ALSO BE REPLACED.

4. LAST CABINET CHANGES WERE KEPT SECRET FROM DISMISSED MINISTERS UNTIL HOUR OR TWO BEFORE PUBLIC ANNOUNCEMENT BY PRESIDENCY. WE CANNOT, THEREFORE, BE 100 PERCENT SURE THAT NO MAJOR PORTFOLIOS WILL CHANGE HANDS. HOWEVER, FONMIN FAHMY, MININT SALIM, AND MINWAR GAMASY ARE SECURE IN THEIR POSTS TO BEST OF OUR KNOWLEDGE. SADAT'S CONFIDENCE IN FAHMY HAS BEEN SIGNALLED UNMISTAKABLY IN LAST FEW DAYS. ON APRIL 1 AND 11 ALL PAPERS FEATURED LARGE FRONT PAGE PHOTOS OF THE TWO SHAKING HANDS WARMLY; THERE WERE NO ACCOMPANYING STORIES. THIS UNUSUAL PUBLICITY MAY HAVE BEEN INTENDED TO SCOTCH RUMORS THAT FAHMY WILL BE REPLACED BY HAFIZ ISMA'IL WHOSE RETURN FROM MOSCOW ON CONSULTATION HAD RECEIVED LESS PROMINENT FRONT PAGE PHOTO AND STORY PLAY. MOREOVER, SADAT HAS ALREADY ANNOUNCED THAT FAHMY WOULD GO TO MOSCOW APRIL 19.

5. HEGAZY'S CONTINUED TENURE IS LESS SURE. AT TIME OF HIS APPOINTMENT LAST YEAR, MANY BELIEVED HE WAS BEING SET UP AS FRONT MAN TO DEFLECT CRITICISM OF GOE'S ECONOMIC FAILURES AWAY FROM SADAT. NEW INTERNAL ACTION PROGRAM WILL BE PRESENTED TO PRESIDENT NEXT WEEK AND WOULD BE CONVENIENT HOOK ON WHICH TO PEG SELECTION OF NEW FACE TO BE ECONOMIC COORDINATOR, THEREBY (HOPEFULLY) BUYING PERIOD OF RELATIVE CALM ON ECONOMIC FRONT. ALL INFORMATION AVAILABLE TO US, HOWEVER, STILL SUGGESTS THAT HEGAZY IS SAFE FOR TIME BEING. IN ANY CASE, SADAT HAS FEW OBVIOUS CANDIDATES FOR PRIME MINISTER FROM WHICH TO CHOOSE, OTHER THAN SAYED MAR'I, PEOPLE'S ASSEMBLY SPEAKER, WHO
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REPORTEDLY IS NOT AT ALL ANXIOUS TO HAVE THE JOB.

6. BEIRUT PRESS HAS BEEN SPECULATING ON POSSIBILITY OF HAYKAL ACCEPTING IMPORTANT GOE POST. HAYKAL IS NOW SPENDING CONSIDERABLE TIME AT PRESIDENCY AND DRAFTED PART, IF NOT ALL, OF SADAT'S MARCH 29 POLICY ADDRESS. HOWEVER, WE DO NOT BELIEVE HE IS LIKELY CHANGE HIS LIFELONG POLICY OF REFUSING GOVERNMENT JOBS SO AS TO PRESERVE HIS REPUTATION AS INDEPENDENT

POLITICAL COMMENTATOR. HE MIGHT CHANGE HIS TUNE IF HE WERE OFFERED
POST OF PRIME MINISTER, BUT WE BELIEVE THIS IS OUT OF THE QUESTION.
NASSER'S SON KHALID IS BELIEVED TO WANT A CABINET POST, PERHAPS
YOUTH AFFAIRS, AN APPOINTMENT WHICH WOULD USEFULLY BUTTRESS
SADAT'S IMAGE OF FAITHFUL SUCCESSOR TO NASSER.
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